

project tips

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Research helps you ask the right questions of retailers, your designer and/or contractor—and avoid costly mistakes if you are doing the work yourself. The Green Home Remodel series is a great place to start. Next, decide where you'll need help. Find professionals with experience in green design and construction. Contact information for local Green Building Council members can be accessed through Tidewater Builders' Association's website at tba.online.org. Evaluate these professionals, review portfolios and call references to make sure claims are backed up with evidence. Do this research and planning *before* you move forward with your remodel.

EXPAND YOUR DEFINITION OF COST

Initial price gives only a peephole view of the true cost of a product or design over the lifetime of your home. A low purchase price may mean a good deal, or it may signify a lack of quality or durability. Or it may mean that some environmental, health, or social costs are not included in the price. A higher purchase price can mean a *better* deal in the long run: you can actually reduce the cost of living in your home by choosing resource-efficient fixtures (lowering monthly utility bills) and durable materials (requiring less frequent replacement).

Lenders are beginning to recognize the value of ongoing savings to the homeowner. The savings from a more efficient home can cover and even exceed the incremental addition to your mortgage payment, meaning the improvements pay for themselves, and then some.

USE A GREEN BUILDING STANDARD

There are Green Building Standards which are used by most builders and remodelers. These systems assign points based on types of materials, methods of construction and the extent of integration with the site and neighborhood.

Materials are rated by the amount of energy and resources used in production and transportation, the creation of toxic byproducts and the materials durability and sustainability. Other points are given for construction techniques that use materials efficiently, have recycled content, and are healthy and nontoxic. The energy efficiency of the final product as well as the success of design integration into the environment and neighborhood resources is rated. Projects with the highest point rating are considered the greenest.

The programs are still relatively new but they are growing quickly. Some of the rating systems most commonly used in the Tidewater area are: LEED for Homes, Earthcraft, and the ICC700-2008 Code.

COME HOME TO
NORFOLK
Now

Neighborhood Design
and Resource Center

Want to learn more?

For Green Home Remodel guides, information and more, visit the Neighborhood Design and Resource Center at 111 Granby Street or call (757) 664-6770.

The Green Home Remodeling Series was originally created by the City of Seattle as part of a Sustainable Building Program. The Norfolk Department of Planning and Community Development acknowledges the Seattle City Green Building Program for permission to revise this brochure.



For TTY assistance, please call The Virginia Relay Service at 711 and request connection to the Neighborhood Design and Resource Center. This information can be made available on request to accommodate people with disabilities and those who need language assistance.

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overview

green home choice REMODEL



{ healthy homes for a healthy environment }





green

WHAT IS A GREEN HOME REMODEL?

It's an approach to home improvement with the goal of not only making your home *look* better, but making it *work* better—for both you and the environment. Want a healthier home? Lower utility bills? Reduced maintenance? A cleaner planet? With careful planning, you can create a home that combines beauty, efficiency, comfort, and convenience with health and conservation.

GREEN & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

A green remodel helps move our region toward *sustainability*. Sustainability is *providing for our own needs, and for those of future generations*. It means thinking about the impact of our actions now, and years from now. A sustainable community has a thriving local economy, healthy environment, and good quality of life for all. Green remodeling supports this by buying from local businesses, and using goods and services that are non-polluting and respectful of our Tidewater resources. A green remodel can strengthen community ties through an inclusive design process that involves neighbors and others potentially affected by design decisions. Design features such as front porches can encourage social interaction. Greener neighborhoods have food, shopping, and public transit within walking distance, affordable housing, plus plenty of trees and parks. Consider sharing tools, hosting neighborhood tree plantings, and beautifying traffic circles to enhance a sense of community in your neighborhood.

remodel

If you're thinking about a remodel, you're not alone. Americans spent \$229 billion on remodeling in 2007. Given this level of investment, it makes sense to do things right the first time. Your remodeling goals may include making better use of living space, adding storage, replacing worn-out features, or simply personalizing your home.

A remodel involves a dizzying array of choices. Help is here! The Green Home Remodel series covers common topics:

- Kitchen
- Bath & Laundry
- Roofing
- Landscape Materials
- Paints & Finishes
- and more!



why

Why Consider a Green Remodel?

Cost Savings

Energy efficient and water wise designs and products reduce monthly utility bills. Installing a high-efficiency washing machine can save up to \$90 on energy bills and 6,000 gallons of water every year. The most efficient new appliances typically use 50% less energy than the most wasteful models. Efficient and durable features can last longer and cost less to maintain in the long run.

Health

A green remodel can be good for you, physically and emotionally. Health-focused designs maximize fresh air and natural light, while reducing the risk of injury and asthma. The US EPA includes poor indoor air quality on the list of the top five most urgent public health risks. Levels of air pollution inside a home can be 2-5 times higher than outdoor levels. Using low-toxic materials and good ventilation techniques can help to prevent problems like molds, allergens and poor air quality.

Beauty & Comfort

Inviting and attractive rooms reinforce the comforts of home. Natural materials, high quality lighting and good design details make for pleasing spaces. Your home can be a refuge from the hectic -- and sometimes polluted -- world outside.

Added Value

Classic, well thought-out designs keep things from looking dated and hold their value over time. Homes designed to welcome various ages and abilities are marketable to a larger population (a key benefit for resale). And green elements also represent value: 80% of homebuyers say new homes don't meet their environmental expectations, and 96% say they are willing to pay more for a home with green features.

Ecological Benefit

Remodeling is an opportunity to create a home that enhances the environment, instead of depleting it. With your green remodel project, you can be more resource efficient, minimize waste, and recycle what's left over to reduce the amount of materials ending up in landfills. By choosing environmentally responsible products, you can protect forests, wildlife, and air and water quality. And, for every gallon of water or kilowatt-hour of electricity you save, you reduce the amount of carbon dioxide (the greenhouse gas) entering the atmosphere.

What Does a Green Remodel Look Like?

Green homes don't have to look any different from typical homes. This Green home remodel (shown at right) features a variety of elements you might expect to see:

1. sustainable harvest wood trim,
2. recycled wallboard and insulation,
3. proper ventilation,
4. low toxic finish,
5. water efficient faucet,
6. ample natural light,
7. recycled plastic decking (outdoors),
8. healthy paint, and
9. energy- and water-efficient appliances.

For sustainable building materials search: www.ecobusinesslinks.com/links/sustainable_buildingsupplies.htm

